

## *Getting Started on Your Website*

Congratulations! Starting a new website or revamping an existing one is an exciting journey toward creating a better future for yourself or your business. Understanding your goals is the first step on the journey. The following are some thoughts and questions to aid you in this endeavor.

### *What do you want your website to do?*

Give the most important purpose a "1", next most important a "2". Leave those blank which do not interest you at all.

- To gain a **favorable impression** of the company or organization
  - To **promote my business**
  - To market my business and **acquire new customers or clients**
  - To **sell products directly** taking credit card information over the Internet
  - To **have a way customers can contact us anytime of the day**
  - To encourage potential customers to **contact us by phone or mail** to consummate a sale
  - To **create brand recognition**
  - To **make available product information and price lists** to customers
  - To **reduce printing costs or other overhead**
  - To give my company a **distinct appearance** (Standing out from the crowd is invaluable.)
  - To generate new business
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
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### *Who are you designing your website to attract?*

By answering this question you can develop your website to meet their needs and desires. Consider who you want to reach with your message is it:

- Potential clients and customers
  - Current clients and customers
  - Distributors and Vendors
  - Members of you organization
  - Friends and Family
  - Others \_\_\_\_\_
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If you have current clients or customers are thy potential visitors to your website? Do you have products or services to offer and who is looking for those items? Are you seeking volunteers or new members for your organization?

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*Why would your website attract those you seek to connect with?*

What information will your audience be seeking and will you offer to attract them? Please select those items below that best fit your goals or attach a sheet that does.

Information about you or your company

- Who are you and what do you offer?

Information about your products or services

- What products or services do you offer? (if you have this in some format already please provide that to us)
- List your rates/prices for products or services offered? (if you have this in some format already please provide that to us)
- Do you offer discounts or incentives and if so what are they?

Do you offer instructions, tips or techniques to share or sell?

- Please list the major categories here

Are you wanting to start an online community around a central or common subject?

- Please list the subject

Other categories or information not listed above

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*The Competition*

## Getting Started on Your Website

Your website needs to stand out from the competitions website through providing services in a different more timely or effective way, by having a website that is easier to navigate which showcases your products and services in an attractive, inviting manner. You will find it beneficial to visit your competitor's websites and determine what makes their sites work or not work. Determine if you like their layout, navigation, information, accessibility and view. What forms of contact information is offered? Does it take forever to load or does it load quickly?

Make a list of at least 3 websites you really like and list what you like about them.

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List 3 websites you don't like and why you don't like them

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2.

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3.

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*What content and features do you want your website to have?*

Please select from the list below and add anything else you can think of at the bottom of the list.

\_\_\_ About Me/Us (info on history, mission, philosophy, items of interest)

## *Getting Started on Your Website*

- Products or Services (description, cost, graphics, how to order)
  - Contact (how can the website visitor contact you)
  - Links (to sites that add to your areas of interest whether personal or professional)
  - Site Map (a simple listing of every page or feature throughout your website)
  - FAQs (simple explanations to commonly asked questions you have received about what you are offering)
  - Blog (offering your visitor an opportunity to read about news, events or your opinions and to comment on)
  - Shopping Cart (ecommerce – from paypal to a complete store)
  - Surveys (there is no better way to find out what your clients or visitors think about what you offer)
  - Guestbook (a place for visitors to sign in and leave comments for you)
  - Newsletter (offer an email newsletter that links back to your website for further details)
  - Calendar (Does what you offer have a schedule or events that you would like to share in calendar format?)
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
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*What other necessary steps are needed to make your website a success.*

1. **Domain Name** Do you currently have a domain name?
2. **Web Host** Do you have a Web Host?
3. **Ecommerce** You will need to get a merchant account and secure server facilities (SSL certificates) for more than 50 products. If less than that in number than you should be able to use PayPal and make use of open source shopping cart services.
4. **Website Content** You will need to assemble the content (text narrative, photo images, graphics, logo, etc.) for the websites creation.
5. **Website Maintenance** Will you be maintaining your site... if so some software may need to be purchased.
6. **Website Advertising** How will you promote your website? What search engines will you list on and are you willing to pay to be on? Do your business cards, brochures and flyers have your url on them?

Once you have had time to consider your websites development, design or redesign please contact Karen Johnston at: [karen@kjwebarchitect.com](mailto:karen@kjwebarchitect.com) or call 503-352-9441.